

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7160

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 3257

NODIS

DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE AND USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT--SCHEDULING APRIL 2

REF: STATE 64265

1. POLCOUNS RAISED OUR INTEREST IN PLANNING FOR ADDITIONAL BILATERAL MEETINGS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND OBASANJO TODAY WITH MEA AMERICAS DEPT DIRECTOR MUSA AND DEPUTY CHIEF OF PROTOCOL ABDULLAHI. AFTER LISTENING TO RATIONALE IN PARA 2, REFTEL, THEY INDICATED THAT A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR APRIL 2 IN LAGOS HAD BEEN PREPARED YESTERDAY BY THEIR PLANNING COMMITTEE. THE EVENTS THEY LISTED WERE: WREATHLAYING AT CENOTAPH, VISIT TO AGRICULTURAL PROJECT, RECEPTION OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND SIGNING OF COMMUNIQUE.

2. WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT THE AGRICULTURAL PROJECT, THEY ADMITTED THEY DID NOT HAVE A SPECIFIC ONE IN MIND BUT WERE ATTEMPTING TO IDENTIFY ONE WITHIN 30 MINUTES DRIVE OF THE STATE HOUSE. THEY WERE PARTICULARLY INSISTENT ON THE RECEPTION FOR THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, POINT OUT THAT IT WAS THEIR TRADITION AND THAT MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS WOULD BE 'INSULTED' IF NIGERIA SHOULD BREAK TRADITION WHEN 'THE MOST IMPORTANT HEAD OF STATE IN THE WORLD' WAS VISITING. THEY HAD ALREADY TRIED TO INCLUDE
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PRESENTATION OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS TO THE PRESIDENT DURING THE WELCOMING CEREMONY BUT FOUND IT WOULD ADD A HALF HOUR TO THE CEREMONY.

3. THEY WERE GENERALLY RECEPTIVE TO EVENTS SUGGESTED IN THE DRAFT SCHEDULE IN REFTEL, SAYING THEY TOO HAD BEEN CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF ATTENDING CHURCH. THEY SAID OBASANJO CUSTOMARILY

ATTENDS CHURCH SERVICES IN A SMALL CHAPEL IN DODAN BARRACKS. THEY THOUGHT IT WOULD BE TOO SMALL, HOWEVER, FOR THIS OCCASION. THEY REFUSED TO SPECULATE ON WHETHER OBASANJO WOULD ACCOMPANY THE PRESIDENT TO CHURCH. WITH REGARD TO A TOUR OF THE DOCK FACILITIES, THEY FORESAW LOGISTIC AND SECURITY PROBLEMS.

4. NEITHER MUSA NOR ABDULLAHI WERE INFORMED OF THE MINI-SUMMIT PROPOSAL, WHICH IS NOT SURPRISING CONSIDERING THAT OBASANJO AND BALEWA HAVE BEEN TOURING OYO AND OGUN STATES. THEY OBSERVED THAT IF SUCH A MEETING SHOULD COME ABOUT, AND IF BILATERAL TALKS WERE SCHEDULED, THERE WOULD PROBABLY BE TIME ENOUGH FOR ONLY ONE OTHER ACTIVITY.

5. ABDULLAHI SAID THEY WOULD HAVE ANOTHER MEETING OF THEIR PLANNING COMMITTEE, PROBABLY ON FIRDAY, TO GIVE FURTHER THOUGHT TO A POSSIBLE SCHEDULE FOR APRIL 2, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION OUR SUGGESTIONS.
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